

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**U.S. EMBASSY GHANA, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SECTION**  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity: Statement of Interest**

<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	U.S. Embassy Ghana Public Diplomacy Section Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI)
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	DOS-ACC-RSOI-2023-01
<b>Deadline for Applications:</b>	February 26, 2023
<b>Federal Assistance Number:</b>	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs (Smith-Mundt)
<b>Total Amount Available:</b>	\$225,000
<b>Maximum for Each Award:</b>	\$35,000

**CONTACT INFORMATION:** If you have any questions about the application process, please contact the Public Diplomacy Section at: [PASAccraGrant@state.gov](mailto:PASAccraGrant@state.gov)

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for questions about the content of this NOFO.

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Ghana Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Department of State announces its Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This is an open competition for organizations to submit a statement of interest to carry out a program aligned with our funding priorities and the strategic themes we focus on. This announcement outlines the procedures for submitting requests for funding. The Public Diplomacy Section of U.S. Embassy Ghana invites organizations interested in potential funding to submit Statements of Interest outlining program concepts that reflect these strategic themes. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of a Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step in a two-part process. Applicants must first submit an SOI, which is a concise concept note (*maximum 3 pages*) that describes your program idea and its objectives before the development of a full proposal application. Upon merit review of eligible SOIs, PAS will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. SOIs may be submitted for consideration by February 26, 2023.

**Purpose of Small Grants:** to **strengthen ties and build relationships between the United States and Ghana** through activities that highlight shared values, goals, and cooperation. All programs must include a **strong, American element, and/or connection with American expert(s), organization(s), or institution(s)** (separate and beyond any involvement with the U.S. Embassy or its American Corners) and have as a primary goal **the promotion of increased understanding of American values, perspectives, and policies aligned with priority areas.**

Examples of Public Diplomacy Small Grants Programs include, but are not limited to:

- Academic or professional speaker programs involving an American speaker, either in person or virtual;

- Artistic and cultural workshops, joint performances, or exhibitions involving the work of American artists or American subject matter;
- Programs developed by U.S.-government sponsored educational or professional exchange program alumni that advance priority goals;
- Roundtables, panels, and workshops focused on U.S. policy priorities; or media training.

**Priority Program Areas** (sample program areas listed, not exhaustive):

- **Improve Accountable Governance, Strengthen Democratic Institutions, and Promote Human Rights**
  - increase transparency in the public sector and civic engagement
  - protect human rights
  - support anti-corruption efforts
  - strengthen the judicial sector
- **Protect Press Freedom**
  - offer professional development for journalists
  - promote media literacy among priority audiences
  - combat and expose disinformation
- **Engage Youth and Marginalized Communities to Bolster Peace and Security**
  - counter violent extremism and gender-based violence
  - promote social inclusion
  - reduce discrimination in all its forms
- **Promote Opportunity and Sustainable, Inclusive Economic Growth**
  - support entrepreneurship
  - promote environmental protection, alternative energy, climate mitigation
  - expand Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) learning opportunities

**Participants and Audiences:**

Programs may be geared to a variety of audiences, depending on the topic. Statements of Interest will be evaluated based on a well-reasoned strategy for addressing intended audience, as well as appropriate inclusivity, whether based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

**The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:**

- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable, development, or social welfare activities;
- Construction programs;
- Programs that support specific religious activities;
- Fundraising campaigns;
- Lobbying for or against specific legislation or programs;
- Scientific research;
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization; or
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: 6-18 months

Number of awards anticipated: 8 to 10 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$35,000

Total expected available funding: up to \$225,000

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2023 Public Diplomacy Funding

Anticipated program start date: On or before July 31, 2023

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

The Public Diplomacy Section reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government. All projects are subject to negotiation by the Grants Officer before final award.

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant or Fixed Amount Award.

**Competition Format and Timeline:** This announcement requests concept notes from qualified organizations. After a technical review and a merit review, Statements of Interest that are determined to have met the criteria explained in this notice will be invited to submit full proposals. Additional guidance and detailed instructions will be provided in the request for a full proposal.

- February 26, 2023 – SOI submission deadline\*
- March 31, 2023 – invitations sent to selected applicants to submit a full proposal
- April 30, 2023 – full proposals due from selected applicants
- June 30, 2023 – notification of selected proposals\*\*

Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 18 months or less.

\*applications received after this deadline may be considered on a rolling basis dependent on available funding and priority program focus

\*\*additional projects may be selected after this date subject to available funding

### **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

The Public Diplomacy Section encourages applications from the United States and Ghana, including:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Individuals
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Governmental institutions

Applicants should be able to document their experience implementing similar projects. For-profit businesses or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov).

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Inclusion of cost share is not a requirement but cost-sharing or optional in-kind contributions will be considered favorably in the review process.

### **One Application per Individual or Organization**

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **Application Package**

This Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) and any amendments and supplementary information can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (search by Opportunity Number) or on the U.S. Embassy Ghana's website at: <https://gh.usembassy.gov/education-culture/public-affairs-small-grants/>

### **Application Deadline**

PAS Accra will accept SOI proposals from the date this NOFO is posted until 11:59pm GMT February 26, 2023. A grants committee will review eligible applications received by this date. SOIs received after this time will be reviewed only as additional funds are available. All SOIs should be submitted by email to [PASAccraGrant@state.gov](mailto:PASAccraGrant@state.gov)

**Please follow all instructions below carefully.** Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement will not be considered.

### **Application Submission Process**

Applications should be submitted by email to [PASAccraGrant@state.gov](mailto:PASAccraGrant@state.gov). The Subject Line of your email begin with: "SOI 2023" followed by the priority program area and name of the proposal.

### **Technical Requirements**

Please send only one Word or PDF document in your application email, which should meet the following requirements:

Three-page maximum Statement of Interest, which contains all of the required elements listed under “Content of Application” below.

Only applications meeting these technical requirements will be considered for review.

### **Content of Application**

Concept Notes should be well written and concise, and contain all of the following information:

- **Heading:** Organization name, Program Priority Area(s) listed above that are addressed by the proposed project; your unique project title; the location(s) of the project; the length of the project; the total amount of funding that will be required.
- **Project Synopsis:** Describe the proposed project, its objectives, key activities, intended audiences and/or participants, project partners (if any), and expected results.
- **American Content:** Describe the American content and how the project will promote a better understanding of the U.S. and/or build relationships with Americans.
- **Budget Estimate:** Outline how the funds being requested will be allocated and in approximately what amounts, using U.S. dollar amounts.
- **Organization background:** A brief description of your organization demonstrating its experience, capacity, and ability to carry out the project and manage a U.S. government award.

### **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

A Grant Review Committee will review all eligible applications. Each application will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

**Project Idea:** Does the concept substantially address one or more of the Program Priority Areas; does it offer an original and impactful idea; does it have the potential to reach the specific audiences listed; does it have a strong American component?

**Project Plan:** Is the project and budget plan realistic and feasible; is there a logical implementation plan, supported by activities along a reasonable timeline and with measurable results; does the implementation plan align with the proposed budget estimate and allocations?

**Ability to Achieve Objectives/Institutional Capacity:** Does the organization demonstrate that it has the experience and capacity to carry out the project; does it offer added value such as relationships with partners and particular expertise and knowledge?

**U.S. Government Alumni participation:** Statements of Interest for projects that include participation of U.S. Government exchange alumni will be given additional consideration.

Successful SOI applicants will be notified of the decision to present a full submission by March 3, 2023. Instructions on the requirements of a full application submission will be provided at that time.

Please note, an invitation to present a full submission is not a financial commitment and is not a guarantee of any future funding.

### **Required Registrations:**

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

**If a SOI is selected, this will need to be obtained before an organization is able to submit a full application.** They are free of charge.

- [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) registration which will generate a UEI

Any applicant with an exclusion in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.”

The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

U.S.-based organizations: A CAGE code will be automatically assigned when the U.S. organizations registers in [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov). CAGE must be renewed every five years. Site for CAGE: <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>. Grantees may be asked for more information to finalized and must comply.

[www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application will be deemed ineligible. All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

**Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.**

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at:

<https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDED AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact the Public Diplomacy Section at: [\*\*\*PASAccraGrant@state.gov\*\*\*](mailto:PASAccraGrant@state.gov)

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, Department of State officials and staff – both in the Department and at embassies or consulates overseas – may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.